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April 27, 2015

SAPC Bulletin # 15-01

TO: Executive Directors

FROM: Wesley L. Ford, M.A., M.P.H., Director
Substance Abuse Prevention and Control

SUBJECT: **NALOXONE AVAILABILITY**

The purpose of this bulletin is to inform you that effective Friday, April 10, 2015, the California State Board of Pharmacy has approved emergency regulations allowing pharmacists to furnish Naloxone without a prescription. Naloxone is a low-cost, non-narcotic medication that reverses the effects of an opioid overdose.

Naloxone will now be available to persons who are currently using or have a history of using illicit or prescription opioids, or those in contact with such persons, by request or at the suggestion of a pharmacist in California pharmacies. Pharmacists who dispense Naloxone are required to receive training on educating potential users of the medication and screening for sensitivity to the medication. Individuals who administer this medication are encouraged to call 911¹ for medical assistance to address potential withdrawal and prevent further harm.

Given the growth of heroin and prescription drug abuse, opioid overdose deaths have increased significantly. As a result, it is important for health care providers to be aware of the increased availability of Naloxone as a potentially life-saving intervention in the event of an opioid overdose.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Gary Tsai at (626) 299-3504 or gtsai@ph.lacounty.gov.

WLF:gt

¹ Per California's "911 Good Samaritan Law," individuals who seek medical care for an overdose victim have limited protection from arrest, charges, and prosecution for simple drug possession, possession of paraphernalia, and/or being under the influence. (<http://www.csam-asam.org/spread-word-911-good-samaritan-law-seeks-prevent-fatal-overdose-0>)